

SHASTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES

Special Meeting

Date: June 22, 2021
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Place: Shasta College Theatre

A video recording of this meeting is available online at:

<https://www.co.shasta.ca.us/index/cob/meeting-videos> (View “Recorded” meeting videos and select “Planning Commission Fountain Wind, Shasta County, CA, Legislative, 06/22/2021, 01:00 PM”)

ROLL CALL

Commissioners

Present:

Patrick Wallner	District 5
Tim MacLean	District 2
Jim Chapin	District 1
Steven Kerns	District 3
Donn Walgamuth	District 4

Staff Present:

Paul Hellman, Director of Resource Management
James Ross, Assistant County Counsel
William Abbott, Abbott & Kindermann, Legal Counsel
Adam Fieseler, Planning Division Manager
Lio Salazar, Senior Planner
Janna Scott, Environmental Science Associates, Project Manager
Mike Manka, Environmental Science Associates, Project Director
Bret Gouvea, Shasta County Fire Warden/Shasta-Trinity Unit Chief
Aaron Burrough, Assistant Chief, CAL FIRE Tactical Aircraft Unit
Ben Rowe, CAL FIRE Shasta-Trinity Unit Forester
Jimmy Zanotelli, Shasta County Fire Marshal
Ken Henderson, Senior Environmental Health Specialist (remotely)
Venton Trotter, Supervising Engineer
Tara Petti, Associate Planner
Tracie Huff, Administrative Secretary I/Recording Secretary (remotely)

Note: All unanimous actions reflect a 5-0 vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - OPEN TIME: There were no speakers.

REGULAR CALENDAR:

R1: APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

By motion made, seconded (Chapin/MacLean) and carried unanimously, the Planning Commission approved the Minutes of May 13, 2021, as submitted.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS: None.

Ex-parte Communications Disclosures: Commissioners Kerns, Walgamuth and Wallner disclosed ex-parte communications with the applicant and staff.

R2: Use Permit 16-007 (Fountain Wind, LLC): Fountain Wind, LLC has requested approval of a use permit for the Fountain Wind Project, a wind energy generation development consisting of the construction, operation, maintenance, and ultimately the decommissioning of up to 71 wind turbines, each with a generating capacity of 3 to 6.2 megawatts (MW) and total tip height not to exceed 679 feet, with a total nameplate generating capacity of up to 216 MW and associated transformers together with associated infrastructure and ancillary facilities, including: a 34.5-kilovolt (kV) overhead and underground electrical collector system to connect turbines together and to an onsite collector substation; overhead and underground fiber-optic communication lines; a temporary construction and equipment laydown area; 14 temporary laydown areas distributed throughout the project site to store and stage building materials and equipment, an operation and maintenance facility; up to four permanent meteorological evaluation towers (MET); temporary, episodic deployment of mobile Sonic Detection and Ranging (SoDAR) or Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) systems within identified disturbance areas (e.g., at MET locations); two storage sheds; three temporary batch plants; and newly constructed and improved existing access roads. The approximate 4,464-acre project site is within an approximately 29,500-acre leasehold area comprised of 76 Shasta County Assessor's parcels consisting exclusively of private timberlands used for commercial forest management. The leasehold area and project site is located approximately one mile west of the existing Hatchet Ridge Wind project, 6 miles west of Burney, 35 miles northeast of Redding, immediately north and south of California State Route 299, and near the private recreational facility of Moose Camp and other private inholdings. Staff Planner: Lio Salazar, Senior Planner.

Lio Salazar and Janna Scott presented the staff report. Commissioner Kerns asked questions of staff. The public hearing was opened.

Representatives of Fountain Wind, LLC spoke in support of the project.

Mary Machado representing Shasta VOICES, Andrew Meredith representing the California State Building & Contractors Trades Council, and Rustin Johnson representing the Northeastern California Building & Construction Trades Council spoke in support of the project.

A recess was called at 3:45 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 4:01 p.m.

The following individuals spoke in person and via telephone in support of the project:

Randall Smith, Johnny McCoy, James Williams, William Smith, Doug Radford, John Wilson, Eihnard Diaz, Andy Main, Dave Kirk, Chad Scott, Dwight Evans, Bill Walker, Karl Pineo, Joshua Cagle, James Jordan, John Vona, Robert Siderdine, and two unidentified individuals.

Bruce Webb representing the Wintu Audubon Society (via telephone) and Agnes Gonzalez and others representing the Pit River Tribe spoke in opposition to the project.

A recess was called at 5:15 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 5:45 p.m.

Brandy McDaniels representing the Madesi Band of the Pit River Tribe, Gregory Wolfen and others representing the Illmawi Band of the Pit River Tribe, John Gable and Janice Smith representing Moose Camp, David Wardall and James Barnes representing Associated Aerial Firefighters, Gill Wright representing the California Pilots Association, David Ledger representing Shasta Environmental Alliance, and Beth Messick Lattin, Steven Johnson, Gary Cadd, Joseph Osa, and Maggie Osa representing Citizens in Opposition to the Fountain Wind Project spoke in opposition to the project.

A recess was called at 8:03 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 8:13 p.m.

The following individuals spoke in person and via telephone in opposition to the project:

Fred Ryness, Susan Foster, Larry Johnson, Jack Potter, Jr. representing Redding Rancheria, Steve Gresham, Bill Carlson, Tony Yiamkis, Dick Wentworth, Dennis Verhema, James Coleman, Linda Johnson, Charlie P., Lisa Macdonald, Kelly Willett Tanner, Awi Gustafson, Conner Yiamkis, Beverly Wakefield, Natalie Forest Perez, John Lammers, Jonathon Freeman, Kenneth Bird, Kenwani Kravitz, Mark Lebeau, and two unidentified individuals.

The following individuals spoke via telephone in support of the project:

Rudy Gonzalez and three unidentified individuals.

Representatives of Fountain Wind, LLC spoke in rebuttal to comments made in opposition to the project.

With no additional speakers in support or in opposition to the project, the public hearing was closed. The Commissioners individually expressed their concerns regarding the project.

By motion made and seconded (Kerns/Chapin), and carried unanimously, the Planning Commission adopted a resolution to deny Use Permit 16-007, based on revised findings as recommended by staff.

The Commission denied Use Permit 16-007 due to a number of significant and unavoidable issues raised both in the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) and in public testimony during the special meeting, as well as comprehensive reviews of the Draft EIR along with public testimony, both written and oral, received over the last 2.5 years. The FEIR stated that the proposed project was for the construction of up to 72 wind turbines and associated infrastructure with the actual number and location to be determined at a future date (FEIR pp. 1-3). The FEIR noted significant and unavoidable issues concerning the impacts of the project to the aesthetics of the area, impacts to selected wildlife species, impacts to forest resources and impacts to native American culture. The Commission found the FEIR erred in not addressing the significant impact of the removal of aerial fire-fighting capability due to the location and height of the proposed structures, thus putting the communities of Round Mountain, Montgomery Creek, Moose Camp, Big Bend, and Burney into a significantly dangerous position. The Commission acknowledged that there would be a significant revenue increase to Shasta County during the buildout phase of the project. However, looking at the long term, the financial return would be minimal and, therefore, did not constitute an overriding circumstance. The Commission noted that those who spoke in favor of the project were from out of the project area, while all of those within the project area were against the project. With these considerations, the Commission found that

the establishment, operation and maintenance of the subject use, under the circumstances of the particular case will be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood or will be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the County (Shasta County Code subsection 17.92.020.F).

ADJOURNMENT: The Planning Commission adjourned at 10:54 p.m.

Submitted by:



**Paul Hellman, Director of Resource Management
Secretary of the Planning Commission**